

Context

- 1] Jesus has arrived in Jerusalem for the last time.
- 2] He clashes with various religious leaders (21:15, 23, 45; 22:34, 41), while the crowd were astonished at His teaching (22:33) accepting him as a prophet (21:46).
- 3] After dealing with the question of His authority (21:23-27), he tells a series of 3 parables all dealing with who is acceptable to God and who are His true people.

MP Those who have rejected God, may in the end accept and obey Him, and vice versa.

KV 'I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you.' (31b)

Parable

- a) Where is God represented? - God is the Father
- b) With whom are we meant to identify? - One of the sons
- c) What is the subject? - The subject is 'believing in Jesus'.

The 'engagement' (28a; 31a)

- 1] What do you think?

Le make up your mind

- 2] Which of the two did as their father wanted?

Engage your mind – a decision is required

The story (29-31)

- 1] parable of vineyard

Cf vineyard – of the workers (20:1-16), of the tenants (20:33)

Nb OT Vineyard = Israel (Is 5:1-7)

- 2] two sons - a single point being made (28a)

Cf (Luke 15:11ff)

- 3] 'son' addressing as with a father's authority - work in the vineyard (28b)

Nb the work of God is to believe in the one whom he sent (Jn 6:29)

God instructs us to do His Work / he doesn't invite us!

- 5] Response

- a) Son 1 – rejects then obeys (29)

GGG We are allowed to change our mind

- b) Son 2 - 'sir' = outer respect, then disobeys (30)

We have the freedom to say 'no'.

- 6]? Which one did the father's will (31a)

Nb not 'better' ie comparative, but absolute = 'what the Father wanted'.

Jesus' reply

- 1] 'I tell you the truth' (31c)

cf 'I am the Truth' (Jn 14:6)

Jesus tells / is the Truth

2] the point (31d)

a) tax collectors and prostitutes

b) The Kingdom of God – ‘the unchallenged rule of God’

nb Matt = Kingdom of Heaven except - Kingdom of God has come upon you (12:28) hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God (19:24) and here?

Nb unless you exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees you shall not enter the Kingdom of God (5:20) Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness (6:33)

c) ahead of (‘before’ KJV) you

GGG the thing that gives us entry into the Kingdom of God is God’s grace

3] Explanation (32)

a) J the B – the way of righteousness

cf the way of the Lord (3:3)

The way of righteousness (Gen 15:6)

nb People confessed sins/ were baptised (3:6) in anticipation of a greater one to come (3:11)

Jesus is ‘the way of righteousness’

b) Tax collectors and prostitutes believed and you didn’t

cf Repent (and believe), the Kingdom of Heaven is near (4:17)

**Our response to the Word of God is repent & believe.*